

World Refill Day: Ocean Bottle launches petition to demand more public water fountains

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, June 16, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Social impact company Ocean Bottle has today launched [a public petition](#) calling on central and local government to install a network of publicly available water fountains across the UK.

The company has written to its 30,000-strong customer base to get the ball rolling and is also drawing on a pool of supportive politicians who have backed the campaign, to help spread the word.



Launched to coincide with World Refill Day – a global campaign to prevent plastic pollution and help people live with less waste – the petition highlights survey evidence that most people in the UK (78 percent) own a reusable bottle but are often unable to fill up on the go.

74 percent of UK adults say they can go a whole day without seeing a water fountain while out and about.

Britons spend approximately £1.6 billion per year on bottled water, much of which is imported from abroad . As a result, some 5.5 billion plastic bottles are littered, landfilled or incinerated each year, contributing 233,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions .

The petition reads: “With the help of central government funding, local councils must install a comprehensive network of refill spots across the UK.”

Carrying out a series of FOI requests in London Boroughs, the social impact company also found that there are approximately 19,000 people to each council-operated water fountain in the capital. This means there are fewer publicly available water fountains in London than there were in Ancient Rome.

Today's launch marks an expansion of the campaign beyond London by calling on councillors across England to heed public calls for more water fountains as temperatures rise for summer.

Ocean Bottle co-founder Will Pearson said: "The hottest day of 2022 saw 638 more deaths than normal in England. This is only set to increase amid rising global temperatures.

"Regular access to water is essential in protecting people from dehydration, overheating and heat exhaustion, all of which put pressure on the NHS and can be fatal.

"Yet currently there are not nearly enough water fountains around to help keep people hydrated in the summer months, leading to enormous public health risks."

In the absence of clear government action, Will Pearson credits third party initiatives for stepping up to make free water more publicly available. Most notably, City to Sea has launched a hugely successful refill campaign to making free drinking water available in thousands of cafes and restaurants.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, Deputy Chair of the London Assembly's Transport Committee, said: "As temperatures soar, World Refill Day is a real chance for the millions of people who carry around a reusable bottle to make their voice heard

"I hope that many will sign this petition and that councils and central government alike will then sit up and take notice. Water refill points should be as common a sight as postboxes and litter bins – without them, too many people end up buying water bottled in polluting plastic."

Jo Royle, Founder and CEO of charity Common Seas said: "We welcome calls for the Government to increase funding for more water fountains across the UK. This is a vital step in reducing plastic waste, as plastic bottles make up nearly a third of all plastic packaging in the UK despite so many owning reusable water bottles.

"A truly circular economy cannot be delivered without the correct infrastructure. If we are to make refilling the norm, free water must be conveniently available for all."

The petition is available for everyone to sign at [Change.org](https://change.org)

<https://oceanbottle.co/>

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